(c) and (d) Setting-up a dedicated freight rail corridor between Mumbai and Delhi would facilitate smooth and speedy evacuation of cargo, particularly containerized cargo, from/to Jawaharlal Nehru Port and Mumbai Port to/from their destinations/origin in the northern and north western hinterlands. However, there is no firmed up proposal for a dedicated freight rail corridor between Delhi and Mumbai at present.

High Security Registration Plates

2602. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to make High Security Registration Plates mandatory for all vehicles in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the cost involved in replacement of the old plates for each vehicles, and rational behind this decision;

(c) whether Government have fixed any time frame for the replacement of the old plates by the new High Security Registration Plates; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The date of implementation of High Security Registration Plates in respect of new vehicles has been prescribed as 31st May, 2005 or any earlier date as may be specified by a State Government for that State.

The main features of the Plates are as under : —

i. Chromium hologram which is not easily replicable.

ii. A Retro-reflective film, bearing a verification inscription 'India' at 45 degree inclination, which cannot be easily replicated.

iii. Laser Numbering, which is unique in nature containing alpha-numeric identification of both Testing Agencies and the manufacturers.

iv. The registration numbers to be embossed on the plates making it difficult to be replicated.

v. In case of rear registration plate, same is to be fitted with a non-reusable snap lock to make it tamper proof.

vi. A Chromium based third registration plate in form of sticker is to be attached to the wind shield, wherein the number of engine and chassis are indicated alongwith the name of registering authority. If tampered with, it self destructs.

vii. In front and rear registration plates, letter IND in blue colour is hot stamped.

viii. Letters 'IND' in blue colour on extreme left centre of the plate.

The objective underlying the scheme is to enhance safety of vehicles on the roads through improved visibility as also improved the security of vehicles by introducing a number of security features in Registration Plates, which would make removal, tampering or counterfeiting of such plates difficult.

The cost of the Plates would be known only after the selection of vendors by the States is completed.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Already registered vehicles have been given a lead time to two years i.e. upto 31st May, 2007 to switch over to the new High Security Registration Plates.

High Berthing Charges in Shipping Industry

2603. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the high berthing charges are acting as a negative point in increased shipping activity in the country;

(b) the guideline issued by Government to various port trusts in this regard to maintain a competitive set of berthing charges;

(c) whether Government would take steps to bring down the present rates charged by all major port trusts in the country;

(d) whether it is also a fact that inefficiency and high port charges are suffocating the entire shipping industry; and

(e) the steps proposed to study such hindrances being caused to the development of the shipping sector in the country?